

Hand Washing



Where can I get other information?

Telehealth Ontario
1-866-797-0000, TTY 1-866-797-0007

Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care 1-866-532-3161, TTY 1-800-387-5559
www.health.gov.on.ca

Health Canada 1-866-225-0709
TTY 1-800-267-1245
www.hc-sc.gc.ca

Thunder Bay District Health Unit
1-807-625-5900
www.tbdhu.com

Northwestern Health Unit (Dryden)
1-807-223-3301
www.nwhu.on.ca

REMEMBER...Your health and the health of those around you rests in your clean hands



Reduce the risk of common infections and viruses



Contact Information

Office Hours: 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
(Local Time) Monday to Friday

Thunder Bay

961 Alloy Drive
Thunder Bay, ON P7B 5Z8
Tel: 1-807-345-7339
Toll-free: 1-800-626-5406

Kenora

35 Wolsley Street, Suite #3 Kenora, ON P9N 0H8
Tel: 1-807-467-4757
Toll-free: 1-877-661-6621

Dryden

6 – 61 King Street Dryden, ON P8N 1B7
Tel: 1-807-223-5948
Toll-free: 1-877-661-6621

Fort Frances

110 Victoria Avenue
Fort Frances, ON P9A 2B7
Tel: 1-807-274-8561
Toll-free: 1-877-661-6621

Disponible en français.

**Home and Community Care Support Services
North West (Head Office)**

975 Alloy Drive, Suite 201
Thunder Bay, Ontario P7B 5Z8
Telephone: 807-684-9425

Revised May 2019
Ref G #13

HELP STOP THE SPREAD OF GERMS: KEEP YOUR HANDS CLEAN

Why is it important to keep hands clean?

The most common way germs are spread is by people's hands. Touching your eyes, nose or mouth without first cleaning your hands can lead to illnesses such as colds, diarrhea, flu and serious diseases such as Hepatitis A. Hand washing is the single most important thing you can do to help reduce the spread of infections. Washing your hands with soap and warm water can help protect you, your family, children and others.

When should I wash my hands?

Hand washing should be a part of your daily routine, especially:

- When hands are visibly dirty
- After using the bathroom
- After blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing
- After touching animals or animal waste
- Before eating or handling raw food
- After changing a baby's diaper
- After handling garbage
- After touching an ill or injured person



How do I wash my hands properly?

It takes at least 15 seconds to wash your hands properly– this is about how long it takes to sing "Happy Birthday to You" twice through.



1 Remove jewellery and wet hands and wrists with warm water



2 Apply 1-2 squirts of soap (size of a quarter)



3 Lather and scrub palms, top of hands and fingers for 15 seconds



4 Rinse thoroughly under warm running water



5 Dry hands with a single use towel or air dry hands



6 Turn off tap with towel after drying hands



Are hand sanitizers an alternative to washing with soap and water?

Hand sanitizers containing at least 60% alcohol are very useful when soap and water are not available and hands are not visibly dirty.

Apply a small amount and rub your hands together, spreading the sanitizer over your fingers, the top of your hands and wrists. Rub them together for at least 15 seconds until the gel feels dry.

Alcohol is very drying to skin, you may apply a non-scented lotion after cleaning your hands.

What else can I do to help prevent the spread of infection?

- Stay home when you are ill
- Cover your nose and mouth with a disposable single-use tissue when sneezing and/or cough into your sleeve
- Keep your nails short and avoid chipped nail varnish